

Two Worlds/Two Ethics

The evolution and devolution of the video artworld

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In the late 1980s underground filmmaker George Kuchar, who had started making 8mm films with his brother Mike in the early 1960s as a precocious Bronx teenager, got a highly portable 8mm video camera [Sony handycam?]. Small enough to be easily carried in one hand, Kuchar began what is now a long series of video diaries using a characteristic personal style of in-camera editing. While shooting sequentially, Kuchar would simply back up the analogue tape and shoot again if he decided something really wasn't worth saving or didn't connect with the evolving themes, styles, and form of the piece. This allowed him to make a first generation tape which could be bumped up to a larger more stable format as a master for release copies (acknowledging the technical limits of small format analogue production by reducing the generational loss that video editing would produce). The resulting diary work was a near-perfect expression of auteur shaggy-dog personality and somewhat cinema-verite spontaneity, with its best known expression in *Thursday People*, a ___ min video of his daily life marked by a film screening honoring Curt McDowell, Kuchar's former student and colleague at (art school) who is dying of AIDS. On Thursdays friends drop by to visit with the bed-confined McDowell. A personal documentary of the late 80s AIDS epidemic and